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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to examine the relationship between American mass media and the black community. Subjects were two groups of black midwestern college students--one group studying at a predominantly black university and the other at a mostly white university--with similar social and economic backgrounds. It was hypothesized that black students in a racially heterogenous environment would have media habits more similar to the general population, while the students at the predominantly black campus were expected to be closer to the "norm" of black communication behaviors. Results of a self-administered questionnaire on media preferences and habits indicated that both groups were dissatisfied with the local media's efforts to address their needs and produce material of interest to them. A large number, however, rated local media neither good nor bad, which supports another hypothesis that blacks have been conditioned by the media to expect to be portrayed negatively. Both groups indicated they wanted to see more black programs, read more news of interest to blacks, and hear more black oriented music on the radio. Data did not support the hypothesis that blacks on predominantly white campuses have media habits more similar to those of the general population than do black students on mostly black campuses. (Seven tables of data and 20 references are included.) (AEW)

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A STUDY OF MEDIA USE AND RELIANCE PATTERNS, INTEREST LEVELS, ATTITUDES AND PREFERENCES OF BLACK STUDENTS AT A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE AND A PREDOMINANTLY BLACK UNIVERSITY

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A Study of Media Use and Reliance Patterns, Interest Levels, Attitudes and Preferences of Black Students at a Predominantly White and a Predominantly Black University

INTRODUCTION

There is evidence in mass communication literature to indicate strong dissatisfaction among black audiences with mass media's efforts to recognize and portray the opinions, concerns and media choices of blacks in America.

The perceived failings of the media are demonstrated when national and local media institutions often lack on a daily basis significant numbers of informative, special-interest features and programs that interest black audiences and which deal objectively with issues and problems of concern to them.

Mass communication research seems also to suggest that more often than not, the ethnocentric nature of America's mass media, the traditional concepts of news and the way it is gathered and written, as well as the crisis orientation of this country's media are the reasons the media needs and expectations of black audiences are often relegated to back-burner status.

In a recent study of the reporting deficiencies of this country's newspaper institutions, Martindale argues for the kind of newspaper coverage of black citizens that would meet the social responsibility standards as outlined by the Commission on Freedom of the Press just after World War II. These recommendations could apply equally to other media:

> First, it might be expected that newspapers would cover the same kinds of news about blacks as they do about whites, the ordinary life of the black community, as well as the unusual, and avoiding emphasis on stereotypical kinds of images.[1]

Research indicates that the relationship between America's mass media and the black community at best is a peculiar one. There is also evidence to suggest that this relationship affects the use that blacks make of these media, how much blacks actually rely on these media for news and information and the gratification received from media consumption.

Sharon suggests that newspapers may be read by fewer blacks than whites because of their lack of relevance to blacks' needs and concerns and because black-oriented newspapers are unlikely to be available to blacks living outside of the nation's metropolitan areas.[2]

Although the researchers warned against this interpretation, Allen and Bielby's study of blacks' relationship with the print media did seem to suggest the possibility of blacks being oriented to the media in racial terms. They also found that subjective orientations such as anomie, alienation from white society and black identity, as opposed to social structural variables, were the most important factors in blacks' assessment of the media.[3]

Even though the mass media are capable of serving what Katz et al. call "a multiplicity of needs and audience functions,"[4] devotion to servicing the special information needs of the black community has not been one of them. America's mass media have socialized blacks to expect to read the very worst in print

concerning their lives and affairs, and to hear and see the same negative images on their radio and television sets. In learning this lesson, however, blacks have become distrustful of and unsympathetic to media efforts to do otherwise.

In his study of black and Mexican-American attitudes toward newspaper and television, Tan found that blacks were consistently negative in their evaluations of television and newspapers.[5] A large majority felt that most television shows didn't appeal to blacks and that they were not satisfied with how blacks were being portrayed on TV. He also found that subjects in the study thought newspapers were not reporting enough good news about blacks nor treating them fairly.

The failings of the media and their exclusion of the black point of view has been suggested as a major factor in the development of America's black media -- newspapers and magazines in particular. Black Americans came to depend on the black press, which reached its zenith during World War II, to recognize their concerns, identity, and presence.[6]

Black-oriented media have also served a socially integrative function for blacks in America. One perspective of the social integrative capabilities of the media, as proposed by Katz, Gurevitch and Haas, is that mass media are used by individuals to "strengthen or weaken connections --cognitive, affective and integrative -- with family, tradition and institutions of society."[7] They hold that different media are used for different kinds of connections.

Because other media have traditionally failed to adequately portray the black cultural experience in this country and to fairly acknowledged the contributions of blacks and black culture to this society, there is evidence in the literature to suggest that many blacks in this country use black-oriented media, especially radio and magazines, as a connection to the social norms and cultural heritage of the black community.

Jackson found that middle-income respondents who reported listening to black-oriented local radio stations gave high priority to "soul" music while low-income respondents preferred an invaried diet of "soul" music. He concludes that blacks identify with certain types of music "regardless of their present socio-economic status or life cycle factors, such as sex and age" and that this music represents a cultural way of life for blacks in America.[8]

Jackson also concludes that those respondents who reported reading Ebony magazine and other black magazines "no doubt feel that these publications are relevant, talk their language, and deal with things that are important to blacks as an ethnic group."[9]

Carter found that the majority of blacks surveyed in San Francisco read black newspapers to get information about what was happening in the black community, because they can relate to the writers of the articles, because these newspapers show how things are in real life, and because these newspapers show how people solve their everyday problems.[10]

There are very few empirical studies which examine the relationship between America's mass media and the black community. Even fewer studies are available which analyze and evaluate the relationship of a select sub-population of the black community -- black college students.

Given the criticisms levied against mass media, what is warranted are more empirical studies that investigate the use this segment of the black community makes of the media available to them and whether these media are meeting these students' communication needs. Such is the approach of the present study.

METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the communication behaviors and attitudes of two groups of black college students with essentially similar social, cultural, economic backgrounds, but who are situated in varying media environments and who are attending racially different universities. This study examines the kinds of media these students use and rely on, their attitudes towards local media and the types of content they feel satisfy their informational, social and psychological needs.

One sample of the present study is drawn from black students enrolled at Central State University, a predominantly black midwestern university in Wilberforce, Ohio. The other is drawn from black students enrolled at Ohio University, a predominantly white midwestern university in Athens, Ohio. The former's local media environment includes student access to several community and campus black-oriented media, while the latter's is much more

severely limited -- and presenting little student access to black-oriented community media.

Faber, Reese and Steeves' investigation of the relationship between media reliance and media use led them to conclude that, as opposed to socio-economic status variables, individual information needs and satisfactions with available media may be important explanatory variables for information-seeking behavior, source utilization and outcomes of using various media.[11]

Also of importance to the present study is the media environment to which each group of black students being studied is exposed. O'Keefe and Spetnagel argue that research that considers this variable will aid in predicting and understanding media functions and media effects on audience values and behaviors.[12]

Henke's study of perceptions and uses of news media by college students found evidence that suggests college years are a period of socialization which culminate in an orientation toward news and use patterns that may affect future news-acquisition habits.[13]

There are several theories in uses and gratification research based upon empirical evidence as posited by McQuail and Gurevitch useful in the formulation of the hypotheses of the present study. According to these researchers, hypotheses generated by the functional perspective of uses and gratification theories tend to be predictive, deriving media gratifications from social and psychological determinants.[14] These include, McQuail and Gurevitch hold, at least three distinct categories of

variables relating to the life circumstances of individual members of the audience:

1. personality characteristics

2. social roles and social experience (both past and present), and

3. variations in environmental and situational circumstances.

The structural/cultural perspective's dominant theme[15] is the idea that audience expectations and satisfactions derived from the media should be explained primarily in terms of:

1. the patterns of media material that are made available, and

2. the customs, norms, and conventions defining what counts as appropriate ways of using and reacting to media provision that prevail in particular societal settings.

McQuail and Gurevitch also hold that differentiation in audience behavior may stem either from subcultural variations within a given society (such as social class distinctions) or from variations across societies.[16]

According to Gandy, the structural/cultural perspective also explains differences in the media consumption patterns of minority audiences whose media behavior is constrained by socially or culturally determined limits on content and the uses to which it may be put.[17]

In an investigation of black students attending college in non-urban academic settings, situated in varying academic and social environments and whose SES and educational levels are similar, it is expected that there will be some differences in

communication behaviors and attitudes. Predictions of what these differences would be were based on findings in the literature.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions directed the research and addressed expected differences in communication behaviors between the two groups:

1. If the perspective held by Lichtenstein and Rosenfeld is true, that audience members are active agents in their choice and use of the media and that they attempt to satisfy certain needs though certain media,[18] can it then be assumed that the ones most often used by black students in this sample are the ones they feel are meeting their needs? What are these media? Do these vary or conform to findings in other studies investigating the communication behaviors of black audiences?

2. What inferences can be drawn from how interested black students are in receiving certain types of news and information and the type of media used for this information?

3. What inferences can be drawn from their preference for certain types of broadcast programs and news features and the type of media used for these programs and features?

4. Is there a need for local media specifically oriented to meet the informational needs of the black community?

Based upon the literature, it is hypothesized in the present study that in the area of media content, black students on the Central State University campus (in a racially homogeneous environment) will prefer more that is black-community oriented. In exposure to the media, they will rely primarily on black media

and their patterns will more closely follow patterns identified in the literature. Even though the possibility for exposure to other media is greater in the Wilberforce area, they will still depend primarily on black sources.

To the contrary, it is hypothesized that black students on the Ohio University campus (in a racially heterogenous environment) and somewhat removed, in many instances, from a socially homogeneous environment, will have media habits more similar to the general population.

As mentioned, according to Katz, Gurevitch and Haas, mass communication is used by individuals to connect themselves or sometimes to disconnect themselves via instrumental, affective, or integrative relations with different kinds of others. It was hypothesized in the present study that black students on the Central State University campus will be more interested in connecting themselves with "other" blacks, more concerned with what's happening in the black community, and more interested in and aware of campus and local affairs. They will be closer to the "norm" of black communication behaviors than those on the Ohio University campus who are exposed to more of a social-environmental variation -- both in terms of people, surroundings and media that are available to them than will be black students on the Central State University campus.

In Wilberforce, the social environment fosters more of an innercity, segregated environment, and subsequently blacks from the CSU area will be closer to the communicative behaviors exhibited by blacks in innercity communities.

Black students on the Ohio University campus, situated in more of an "integrative" environment, will be more exposed to different frames of references and exposed to a media environment in which there is essentially no black-oriented media. Therefore, still being interested in the world around them, these blacks students out of necessity will tend to rely on available media for news and information regardless of their racial orientation.

Based upon research from previous studies, it was determined that black students on white campuses are almost forced to learn to adjust to the dominant society's reality of culture and behavior and many times forego their own identity, traditions and behavior patterns.[19] They may in many instances also be less strongly motivated to seek out information on the black community but more strongly motivated to seek out information on the community in which they are attending college. Their media habits will also reflect these motivational patterns.

Additionally, because of the availability of several daily newspapers circulating on campus, one of which is a free-of-charge student publication, Ohio University black students will rely primarily on newspapers as their most often used source for news and information.

Because the free-of-charge student publication circulating on the Central State University campus is a weekly, these students, as suggested by Olien, Donohue and Tichenor,[20] will probably rely primarily on television as their most often used source for news and information.

Based on the research perspectives on uses and gratification theory previously outlined in the literature review and the assumptions and conclusions drawn from major investigations on the communication behaviors of black audiences, five general hypotheses were formulated for this study from which 33 specific hypotheses were developed. The five general hypotheses were as followed:

H.1. General media use and media reliance patterns for black students on a predominantly white campus will differ significantly from those of black students on a predominantly black campus.

H.2 Levels of interest in campus, local, national and international affairs will differ significantly for black students on a predominantly white campus from those of black students on a predominantly black campus.

H.3. Levels of satisfaction with the local media's coverage of black community and with the types of radio and television programs available from local media will differ significantly for students on a predominantly white campus from those of black students on a predominantly black campus.

H.4. Preferences for specific types of print features and broadcast programs will differ significantly for black students on a predominantly white campus from those of black students on a predominantly black campus.

H.5. Attitudes and preferences for local black media, type of black media, frequency of black media, sponsorship of black media and support of black media will differ significantly for

students on a predominantly white campus from those of black students on a predominantly black campus.

The 33 specific hypotheses of this study are enumerated in Table 1.

Population and Sample

One of the populations of this study was defined as black freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior and graduate students enrolled at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, during Spring Quarter 1986. The sample from the population at Ohio University consisted of 351 students or approximately 39 percent of the black student body. Demographic information on the sample is given in Table 2.

The second population of this study was defined as black freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior and graduate students enrolled at Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio, during Spring Quarter 1986. The sample from this population consisted of 424 students or approximately 20 percent of the black student body. Demographic information on this population is also given in Table 2.

The rationale for the selection of both samples of this study is that an apriori decision was made by the researcher establishing several pre-planned conditions. Evidence indicated that a large number of students from northern Ohio and Michigan cities attend Ohio University and Central State University. Most of these students were assumed to have similar regional, academic and social backgrounds -- and would probably be accustomed to exposure to black-oriented media.

Demographic data available from both universities indicated that populations would be fairly homogeneous as to permanent residence. A review of the literature on the general mass communication attitudes and behaviors of black audiences gave indications of the second.

From the literature were suggestions that researchers attempt to control for regional, academic and social variables. Other variables considered in the present study pertained to the racial makeup of the universities studied (predominantly white, predominantly black); the media environment (very little black-oriented print and broadcast media vs. a number of black-oriented print and broadcast media); and community characteristics (number of black community residents and proximity of universities to other larger black population centers).

The rationale for the selection of the two nonmetropolitan communities, Athens and Wilberforce, takes all of the above factors into account. It was expected that differences in these factors, especially differences of media availability, would provide the basis for comparisons and analysis of the two groups.

With the exception of several black campus newsletters produced by the Center for Afro-American Studies and the School of Telecommunication at Ohio University, and a Sunday evening five-hour block of time set aside on the campus radio station, WOUB-AM, for black programming, there are no other media or media programs specifically aimed at reaching (or appealing to) black students in the Athens area. (On occasions, WOUB-FM will air some network minority programming.) Nor are there any other black-

oriented broadcast programming options available to them from surrounding media markets (from the Parkersburg, Charleston areas) through Continental Cablevision.

In the Wilberforce area, the campus produces a weekly student newspaper, has a 24-hour campus radio station and several campus newsletters. There are also three black-oriented radio stations in the area, several black newspapers (The Call & Post, Dayton Black Journal, Soul Sophisticator), and available through Continental Cablevision in the Wilberforce area is the nationally-syndicated Black Entertainment Television (BET) network.

Such media availability differences were expected to affect mass media use and reliance patterns of students from both populations as well as their attitudes toward local media.

Research Method

A survey questionnaire was the instrument of this study. The principal means of obtaining data for this study was through modification of the self-administered questionnaire procedure whereby respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire themselves. Using this method, the researcher administered the questionnaire in a variety of settings and locations and at campus activities where potential respondents were gathered in groups.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted over a six-week period in May and June of 1986 (the Spring Quarter for both universities) --

some nine months after the start of the 1985-86 academic school year began in September 1985. This quarter was selected to enable the researcher to gather data from students who had lived in both the Athens and Wilberforce areas for at least nine months, and who would be at least somewhat familiar with the print and broadcast media and media programs available to them in their respective university communities.

Specific classes from each of the nine colleges at Ohio University and the three colleges at Central State university were selected in which to administer questionnaires. Seven dormitories which housed a large percentage of black students were also selected. The student union was also included as one of the locations where significant numbers of black students (mainly those who lived off campus) congregated during peak afternoon hours. The campus library and three cafeterias were also chosen as target areas.

A list identifying black-oriented campus activities during the month of May such as a Talent Extravaganza sponsored by Black Student Programming Board and Jabberwock sponsored by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority was also compiled and targeted for the administration of the questionnaire.

A computerized roster listing Central State University students, their majors and hometowns and a master class schedule was obtained from the registrar and the computer center. From the three colleges, specific classes (mainly from the English and Theater Department, the Business Administration Department, Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department (HPER), the Psychology Department, the Sociology Department, the Biology

Department, the Math Department, Professional Education Department and the Accounting Department were designated as target classrooms to administer questionnaires.

In addition, research workers also were assigned to administer the questionnaire in three men's and three women's dormitories, the student union and the two campus cafeterias.

A list of campus activities sponsored during the month of May and the first part of June (such as May Week, Jabberwock and an open-to-the-public theatrical performance) was also compiled and targeted for the administration of the questionnaire.

Rationale for Research Method

The self-administered questionnaire method was used for this study because it offered not only control over the distribution and collection of the data, but the opportunity to maximize response rate as well. When this procedure is used correctly, the completion rate is usually much higher than it would be for obtaining information through a mailed survey.

In addition, in light of inherent problems which normally exist in mailing questionnaires, use of the mailed survey method for this study might have proven disasterous. Because of the high mobility of the student body in general, the many times inaccurate and imprecise records maintained by the two universities regarding student addresses on and off campus and evidence of an extremely low response rate from black students on both campuses on prior campus questionnaries, such a method would not have yielded an acceptable response rate.

Similar difficulties existed with the use of the telephone interview method which also were considered for this study. In addition, many students on both campuses did not have personal telephones. On the Central State University campus, not only did many students not have personal telephones in their rooms, but in several dormitories hall phones had been removed. Messages had to be hand-carried or otherwise delivered to students.

Instrument Pre-test and Construction

Prior to being administered to respondents, the instrument of this study was pilot tested on students in the College of Communication at Ohio University and on journalism and telecommunication students in the College of Arts and Sciences at Central State University. These students were asked to comment on clarity and wording of questions, length of questionnaire and instructions of questionnaire. It was then revised, shortened and distributed to respondents selected for the study.

The four-page questionnaire was designed to survey the two groups' responses to questions covering six areas: general media use, news and information interest levels, reliance on specific media for news and information, reliance on specific media for news and information pertaining to the black community, levels of satisfaction with local media efforts and preferences for specific black-oriented print features and broadcast programs.

The questionnaire also was designed to examine student preferences for the media best suited to meet the needs of the black community, the sponsorship of these media and student attitudes pertaining to the support of these media. In addition,

several demographic variables were included pertaining to sex, occupation, family income, city and state in which the respondent was reared and the number of years respondent had lived in the area.

Results

The SPSS-X Information Analysis System was used to code the data from this study and to compute the results. Cross-tabulation tables were used with the Chi-Square to test for significant differences in remaining hypotheses. Before collecting data for this study, the level of signficance was set at .05.

The t-test was also run to determine differences in means between the two groups for the first three specific hypotheses.

1. The first general research question posed in this study asked whether it could be assumed that the media most often used and relied upon by the black students being investigated are the ones they feel are meeting their needs.

From the data, it seems that the ones black students at Ohio University and Central State University use and rely on are not so much the ones they feel are meeting their needs -- (as evidenced by the levels of dissatisfaction with and indifference displayed toward local media efforts to address their needs) -- and possibly with the exception of black-oriented media in the Wilberforce area, but the ones that are available and carry broadcast programs and news features of interest to them. (See Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6.)

It was found that both student groups are very interested in national and international affairs, but that Central State University students are more interested in campus and local affairs than are black students at Ohio University. These results are inconsistent with prior research findings that blacks are interested only in news within their own communities. Explanation for such differences can be attributed to the fact that local and campus affairs in the Wilberforce area reflect the occurrences in the community with which students identify.

In Athens, however, local and campus activities generally involve segments of the larger community with which black students in general do not culturally identify. International and national affairs may be perceived as ubiquitous forces that may ultimately impinge upon personal and communal life beyond color or cultural lines. Parochial, provincial and personal viewpoints can be suspended infavor of ideas that represent the good of the whole nation.

2. The second general research question of this study asked what inferences can be drawn from the levels of interest black students have in receiving certain types of news and information and the type of media used for this information. First, Ohio University's black students' lack of interest in campus and local affairs reflects their lack of involvement or "connection" with the activities of the university and city. Second, Central State University's black students' interest in these same affairs reflects a recognition of their "connection" with the activities and lifeline of the university and city.

It was found that black students at Ohio University are slightly more interested in news and information about blacks in their community than are black students at Central State University in news and information about blacks in their community, but in both cases each group was interested in this information and indicated they were not getting enough from the local media. Differences in interest levels may be influenced by the presence or absence of media specifically geared to produce this news and information.

It is also surmised that because black students in the Wilberforce area have greater access to news and information about blacks in their community than do black students in the Athens area, the former are more aware of issues and events affecting them. Because the channels offering news and information about blacks in their community are more limited, black students in the Athens area are subsequently less aware and more interested in obtaining this information.

It was found that both student groups are dissatisfied with the local media's efforts to produce news and information geared to the local black community. (See Table 7.) Black students at Ohio University and Central State University feel they are not getting enough news and information about the black community from the local media, nor enough of the types of television and radio programs they like. Evidence indicates that black students at Ohio University are more dissatisfied. There is also evidence to suggest that the dissatisfaction experienced by students at Central State University is in terms of the receipt of certain

types of news not stressed presently by the local media or in terms of the fairness of that which is presented. Ohio University students feel overly saturated with news and information about segments of the community with whom they do not identify while concurrently perceiving a dearth of information for and about blacks.

Evidence also points to the lack of black-oriented media in the area as one factor and the lack of sufficient numbers of articles of interest to them and broadcast programs they like as another.

It was found that black students both at Ohio University and Central State University prefer to see more black music videos on television, to hear more black musical programs on the radio and to read more black achievement news features in the local print media. These preferences are slight departures from findings in previous studies.

3. The third general research question asks what inferences can be drawn for their preference for certain types of broadcast programs and news features. From the data, it is possible to infer that black students on both campuses prefer media content that is both entertaining and motivational.

The majority of black students at both Ohio University and Central State University favor newspapers, magazines and television programs specifically aimed at reaching the black community and indicate preferences that such media should be produced regularly. As expected, black students at Ohio University favor newspapers and black students at Central State

University favor television as the medium best able to meet specific informational needs of the black community. There are strong indications that media availability in each community may have influenced each group's preference. Black students at Ohio University use newspapers more frequently, have access to more newspapers more regularly and view newspapers as the source most often used to acquire most of their information about the black community. Black students at Central State University, on the other hand, use television more frequently (except when seeking news and information on campus and local affairs) and indicate television as the source most often used to acquire most of their information about the black community.

4. The fourth general research question asks whether there is a need for local media specifically oriented to meet the information needs of the black community. Black students on both campuses seem to think so. Their media use and reliance patterns, preferences and attitudes offer clear indication of the necessity for black-oriented media.

Conclusions

The results of this study suggest the following:

1. Media availability, community structure, media content relevant to blacks' needs and concerns, and cultural and subjective orientations are the most important factors in determining media use and reliance patterns, media attitudes and preferences of respondents in this study.

Black students at both Ohio University and Central State University indicate levels of dissatisfaction with the local

media's efforts to address their needs and to produce news and information that were of interest to them and rank these efforts either "bad" or "very bad." A large percent also felt local media efforts were "neither good nor bad." The latter attitude confirms the hypothesis that as the dominant mass media have socialized blacks to expect to read the very worst in print concerning their lives and affairs, and to hear and see the same negative images on their radio and television sets, blacks have become distrustful of, indifferent and unsympathetic to media efforts to do otherwise.

This dissatisfaction no doubt also influences the use that these students actually make of local media. In this regard, there is a strong indication that the majority of black students in this study have maintained their affinity with black oriented media that reflect black cultural experiences and that meet specific cultural and social needs. Neither is it likely that these students to a large degree will change existing media attitudes and preferences for the sake of accepting what is available in the media aimed at audience members of the larger society.

Black students at Ohio University and Central State University want to see more black programs on television -- music videos, pro-social/political/economic forms and historical documentaries in particular. They want to read more news and information about the black community in the local newspapers -- black achievement news in particular. They want to hear more black-oriented music and black-oriented programs on the local

radio stations -- jazz, talk shows and black community news in particular.

2. It is concluded from the evidence that subjects of this study are oriented to the media in racial or cultural terms and in terms of what they have learned or have been socialized to expect or to not expect from the media. As mentioned, those students surveyed at Ohio University and Central State University tend to seek out, based on prior experiences of media gratifications, those media which carry the types of programs, music and articles of interest to them and those media which address their needs and concerns.

3. There is evidence from the data to make a strong statement on the need for black-oriented media, and on the need for local media in each area to increase their overall sensitivity to media needs and concerns of constituent blacks. The presence of specific types of black-oriented broadcast programs (particularly music videos and other musical programs) and print features (particularly black achievement information) offered by the media investigated in this study also seem to be a predictor of how black students in the two areas use and rely on area media.

4. The literature indicated that black students on predominantly white campuses tend to display a distinctly compliant orientation to whites. In a white media environment, it was hypothesized in the present study that black students in an integrated, heterogeneous environment would also display a distinctly compliant orientation to white-oriented media. Data, however, do not confirm this hypothesis.

Some of the variations in the media behaviors of black students at Ohio University from those of black students at Central State University seem to be influenced by media availability moreso than from media compliance.

Data also indicate that black students on a predominantly white campus, and in more of an integrated environment, will not necessarily exhibit those communication behaviors attributed to white audiences. Neither does it appear they will alter basic interests in or preferences for black-oriented news and information and black-oriented music. Black students whose access to those media and media content to which they are accustomed is somewhat curtailed will, when seeking specific information and programs, utilize and adjust to those available. They will also find alternative sources to meet media needs or will seek to increase their exposure to alternative forms as in the case of those black students surveyed at Ohio University.

5. The communication behaviors of black students on a predominantly black campus, and in more of a segregated environment, can not necessarily be ascertained from the general patterns of media behavior of black audiences as found in the literature. Here too, media availability and other variables posited in this study influence variations in communication behaviors. It was found in this study, however, that general patterns of media behaviors of black audiences as found in the literature more closely than not resembled those of black students at Central State University. Many of the previous studies examining the communication behaviors of black audiences

were conducted in communities (such as Washington, D.C., Detroit, etc.) in which respondents felt more "at home" -- in communities of orientation and cultural harmony rather than in communities of alienation and cultural dissonance.

Recommendations

The study of the communication behaviors of black college students needs further investigation. The focus of the present study is limited to two universities in two nonmetropolitan communities, and general findings may be applicable only to these two groups of students under the conditions of the present study. The possibilities for variations in populations, areas and focus are numerous. Similar studies of this sort can be used for comparative purposes, for more definitive conclusions and to determine whether results are cross-situational.

Questions for future research should also be included to ascertain from students their personal reasons for using and relying on specific media, for holding the attitudes they do toward the local media, for preferring specific media for specific purposes and for preferring black- oriented media and media content.

Based upon the findings of the present study, it is recommended that future studies investigating the communication behaviors of black audiences also explore in depth the cultural context of respondents' use of mass media before attending college. Researchers also may want to more closely examine and identify individual social experiences of respondents.

Differences in the communication behaviors of black students on a prominantly white and a predominantly black university, other than the patterns found in this study, may be attributed to differences in other specific variables which did not manifest themselves in the present study; namely, cultural diversification, family income, family education, family media orientation and area of permanent residence.

To access these differences and their impact, it is recommended that two types of studies of the communication behaviors of black college students be conducted in the future as follow-ups to the present study:

a. A similar study should be duplicated in two large metropolitan communities with greater access to black-oriented media -- preferably in another region of the country, and

b. A similar study should be duplicated at two so-called "Ivy-League" universities with black families of incomes higher than $50,000 and who are not first-generation college goers.

It is predicted that given this set of variables, results from such studies may depart from the findings of the present study. The implications of this prediction are that cultural socialization, cultural diversification, media environment and media availability are all important considerations when analyzing and identifying mass communication behaviors, levels of interests, attitudes and preferences of black students.

ENDNOTES

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TABLE 1

Specific Hypotheses

H.1.1 Black students at OU will read newspapers more often than black students at CSU.

H.1.2 Black students at OU will watch television news and other television programs less often than black students at CSU.

H.1.3 Black students at OU will listen to radio news and other radio programs less often than black students at CSU.

H.1.4 Black students at OU will read magazines less often than black students at CSU.

H.1.5 Black students at OU will read more white-oriented magazines than black-oriented magazines. Black students at CSU will read more black-oriented magazines than white-oriented magazines.

H.1.6 Black students at OU will not read more books per week than black students at CSU; but the kind of books read by the students on both campus will differ with the exception of school-related reading material or textbooks.

Media Reliance

H.1.8 Black students at OU will not rely on radio programs as their primarily source of musical entertainment; black students at CSU will.

H.1.9 Black students on both campuses will rely on the campus newspaper for news and information about campus affairs.

H.1.10 Black students at OU will rely on newspapers for news and information about local affairs; black students at CSU will rely on television.

H.1.11 Black students at OU will rely on newspapers for news and information about national affairs; black students at CSU will rely on television.

H.1.12 Black students at OU will rely primarily on newspapers for news and information about international affairs; black students at CSU will rely on television.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

H.1.13 Black students at OU will rely primarily on newspapers for news and information about blacks in their area; black students at CSU will rely primarily on television.

H.1.14 Black students at OU will rely primarily on white-oriented media for news and information about the national black community; black students at CSU will rely primarily on black-oriented media.

H.1.15 Black students at OU will rely primarily on white-oriented media for black musical programs; black students at CSU will rely primarily on black-oriented media.

Interest in Public Affairs

H.2.1 Black students at OU will be less interested in campus affairs than black students at CSU.

H.2.2 Black students at OU will be less interested in city affairs than black students at CSU.

H.2.3 Black students at OU will be more interested in national affairs than black students at CSU.

H.2.4 Black students at OU will be more interested in international news than black students at CSU.

H.2.5 Black students at OU will be less interested in news and information about blacks in Athens, than will be black students at CSU in getting news and information about blacks in Wilberforce.

H.2.6 Black students at OU will be less interested in watching a locally-produced black-oriented television program than will be black students at CSU.

Attitudes Toward Local Media

H.3.1 Black students at OU will be less likely to feel they are getting enough news and information about the black community from the local media than will be CSU students.

H.3.2 Black students at OU will be less likely to feel that they are getting enough of the types of television and radio programs they like from the local media than will be black student at CSU.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

H.3.3 Black students at OU will be more dissatisfied with the local media's efforts to produce news and information geared to the local black community than will be black students at CSU.

Print and Broadcast Preferences

H.4.1 Black students at OU will prefer to see more television programs that are collectivistic and more politically-oriented; black students at CSU will prefer more programs that are individualistic and entertaining.

H.4.2 Black students at OU will prefer to listen to more musical programs on the radio; black students at CSU will prefer to listen to more community-oriented, talk show programs.

H.4.3 Black students at OU will prefer to read more newspaper features that pertain to black achievement; black students at CSU will prefer to read more newspaper features that pertain to black community news.

Attitudes and Preferences for Area Black Media

H.5.1 Black students at OU will be more likely to oppose newspapers, magazines and television and radio program that are specifically aimed at reaching the black community than will be black students at CSU.

H.5.2 Black students at OU will prefer newspapers as the medium best able to meet specific informational needs of the black community; black students at CSU will prefer television.

H.5.3 Black students at OU will prefer to see specific media and media programs produced for the black community less often than will black students at CSU.

H.5.4 Black students at OU will prefer these media to be campus sponsored; black students at CSU will prefer them to be community sponsored.

H.5.5 Black students at OU will be less likely to think these media will be supported by the general community than black students at CSU.

H.5.6 Black students at OU will be less likely to think these media will be supported by the black community than black students at CSU.

TABLE 2

Demographic Characteristics of the Samples

	OU		CSU	
Sex	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Males	159	45.3	215	50.8
Females	192	54.7	208	49.2

$X^2 = 2.35$, d.f. = 1, n.s.

EDUCATION (Highest Grade Completed)	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
High School	56	16.0	55	13.0
Some College	245	70.2	325	76.7
College	48	13.8	44	10.4

$X^2 = 4.17$, d.f. = 2, n.s.

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Family Income	OU No.	OU %	CSU No.	CSU %
Under $10,000	38	11.4	64	15.8
$10,000 - $19,000	55	16.5	65	16.0
$20,000 - $29,000	66	19.8	76	18.7
$30,000 - $39,000	67	20.1	72	17.7
$40,000 - $49,000	55	16.5	73	18.0
Over $50,000	52	15.6	56	13.8

$X^2 = 3.85$, d.f. = 5, n.s.

PERMANENT RESIDENCE	OU No.	OU %	CSU No.	CSU %
Major Ohio Cities	237	68.9	177	43.1
Major Non-Ohio Cities	40	11.6	136	33.1
Others	67	19.5	98	23.8

$X^2 = 61.42$, d.f. = 2, $p < .05$

TABLE 2 (continued)

LIVED IN AREA	No.	%	No.	%
Less Than One Year	126	41.9	175	41.7
One Year	23	6.6	36	8.6
Two Years	87	24.9	68	16.2
Three Years	46	13.2	55	13.1
Four Years	53	15.2	29	6.9
Five Years	9	2.6	14	3.3
More Than Five Years	5	1.4	43	10.2

$X^2 = 46.0$, d.f. = 6, $p < .05$

TABLE 3

Sources Used Most Often to Get News and Information
by Black Students at Ohio University
and by Black Students at Central State University

	OU		CSU	
Source	No.	%	No.	%
NEWSPAPERS	176	50.1	84	19.8
Magazines	11	3.1	14	3.3
Books	3	.9	2	.5
TELEVISION	105	29.9	285	67.2
Radio	36	10.3	29	6.8
Other People	20	5.7	10	2.4
TOTALS	351	100.0	424	100.0

$X^2 = 114.42$, d.f. = 5, $p < .05$

TABLE 4

Sources Relied Upon Most Often for Musical Entertainment
by Black Students at Ohio University
and by Black Students at Central State University

	OU		CSU	
Source	No.	%	No.	%
Television	22	6.3	30	7.1
RADIO	94	26.9	242	57.1
Concerts	6	1.7	10	2.4
Sound Recordings	210	60.0	129	30.4
Other	18	5.1	13	3.1
TOTALS	350	100.0	424	100.1

$X^2 = 81.25$, d.f. = 4, $p < .05$

TABLE 5

Attitudes Toward Local Media
(Regarding Radio and Television Programs)
As Held by Black Students at Ohio University
and by Black Students at Central State University

	OU		CSU	
Enough Radio and Television Programs	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	43	12.4	109	25.8
No	281	80.7	293	69.3
Don't Know	24	6.9	21	5.0
TOTALS	348	100.0	423	100.1
Missing Values	3		1	

$X^2 = 22.02$, d.f. = 2, $p < .05$

TABLE 6

Ranking of Local Media Efforts
by Black Students at Ohio University
and by Black Students at Central State University

	OU		CSU	
Rank Media Efforts	No.	%	No.	%
Very Good	7	2.0	12	2.8
Good	23	6.7	56	13.2
Neither Good Nor Bad	93	27.2	173	40.8
Bad	131	38.3	137	32.3
Very Bad	88	25.7	46	10.8
TOTALS	342	99.9	424	99.9
Missing Values	9		0	

$X^2 = 44.19$, d.f. = 4, $p < .05$

TABLE 7

Attitudes Toward Local Media
(Regarding News and Information About Black Community)
As Held by Black Students at Ohio University
and by Black Students at Central State University

	OU		CSU	
Enough News and Information About Black Community	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	19	5.4	46	10.9
No	297	85.1	329	78.0
Don't Know	33	9.5	47	11.1
TOTALS	349	100.0	422	100.0
Missing Values	2		2	

$X^2 = 8.46$, d.f. = 2, $p < .05$